



BOROUGH OF CHORLEY.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S
REPORT.

1904.

CHORLEY : A. HILL, PRINTER AND BOOKBINDER.

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CHORLEY, MARCH 1905.
TO THE CHORLEY TOWN COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

In presenting to you my Annual Report for 1904, I am pleased to congratulate you on the lowest Death-rate that I have been able to report to you; but, on the other hand, the Birth-rate of 1904, though not actually the lowest on record, was considerably below that of 1903.

The Birth-rate throughout England and Wales in 1904 was the lowest on record in the country, viz., 27·9 per thousand of the population. The Birth-rate in Chorley was even lower than the average Birth-rate for the country, viz., 27·44., the number of Births registered in the Borough being seven hundred and eighty-two (782). As you will see from Table A the Birth-rate of 1904 was lower than that obtaining in 1903 and in any of the preceding years with the exception of 1900, and consequently lower than the average of the preceding ten years.

TABLE A.

Year.	Estimated Population.	No. of Births.	Birth-rate.
1894	24,700	847	34·33
1895	25,200	882	35·00
1896	25,700	829	32·26
1897	26,000	779	29·96
1898	26,300	799	30·38
1899	26,500	788	29·77
1900	26,750	719	26·88
1901	27,000	759	28·11
1902	27,500	790	28·72
1903	28,000	825	29·46
Average of 1894 to 1903	26,365	801·7	30·49
1904	28,500	782	27·44

There has been a steady decrease of the Birth-rate throughout the County for many years. Compared with the average of the ten preceding years, the Birth-rate in Chorley has decreased by 3·05 per thousand, whilst the decrease throughout England and Wales during the same period was 1·30 per thousand. Of the registered Births in Chorley in 1904 three hundred and eighty-one (381) were Males, and four hundred and one (401) Females.

The number of Deaths registered in Chorley in 1904 was four hundred and fifty-five, yielding, upon an estimated population of 28,500, a Death-rate of 15·96 per thousand per annum. Of these Deaths, two hundred and thirty (230) were Males, and two hundred and twenty-five (225) were Females.

Two (2) Deaths occurred in the Rawcliffe Hospital of persons not resident in Chorley, and five (5) Deaths of residents of Chorley were notified in other Registration Districts. The net number of Deaths of Residents accordingly was four hundred and fifty-eight (458), and the net Death-rate of Chorley 16·07 per thousand. In 1903 the Registered Death-rate was 16·57, and the net Death-rate 16·71, as compared with the Registered Death-rate in 1904 of 15·96, and net Death-rate of 16·07.

You will see from Table B the marked improvement in the Death-rate.

TABLE B.

Year.	Estimated Population.	No. of Deaths.	Death-rate.
1894	24,700	504	20·40
1895	25,200	600	23·81
1896	25,700	582	22·64
1897	26,000	545	20·96
1898	26,300	486	18·48
1899	26,500	577	21·77
1900	26,750	577	21·57
1901	27,000	485	18·05
1902	27,500	462	16·80
1903	28,000	464	16·57
Average of 1894 to 1903	26,365	529·3	20·10
1904	28,500	455	15·96

The average Death-rate in Chorley for ten years preceding 1904 was 20·10 per thousand, as compared with the Death-rate of 1904 of only 15·96—a decrease of more than four (4) per thousand. The Death-rate throughout England and Wales in 1904 was 16·2 or ·8 per cent. higher than that obtaining in 1903. The Death-rates in Chorley, Registered and Net, were ·6 below those of 1903, viz., 15·96 and 16·07, as compared with 16·57 and 16·71 respectively. Again, while the Death-rate of Chorley in 1904 was more than four (4) per thousand less than the average of the preceding ten years, the average decrease throughout England and Wales was only one (1) per thousand. For the first time in my experience as your Medical Officer of Health, I am able to report that the Death-rate for 1904 in Chorley was below the average Death-rate obtaining throughout the country—considerably less than the average Death-rate of the Seventy-six largest towns, and only slightly higher (·36 per thousand) than the average rate of the one hundred and forty-two smaller towns amongst which Chorley is enumerated.

TABLE C.

The Death-rate in Chorley in 1904 was .. .	..	15·96
The Death-rate throughout England and Wales was .. .	..	16·2
The Average Death-rate in 76 of the largest towns in England and Wales was .. .	..	17·2
The Average Death-rate in 142 smaller towns in England and Wales was .. .	..	15·6
The Death-rate of England and Wales, excluding these 218 Towns, was .. .	..	15·3

If an equal improvement occur in 1905, the Death-rate of Chorley will be brought down to that of the Rural districts.

The great decrease in the number of Deaths occurred in the third Quarter of the year, though in each of the Quarters the number of the Deaths registered was below that of the average of the ten preceding years. You will see from Table D that, compared with 1903, more Deaths occurred in 1904 in the first and fourth Quarters, and fewer in the second, and especially the third, Quarter.

TABLE D.

Year.	First Quarter. Number of Deaths.	Second Quarter. Number of Deaths.	Third Quarter. Number of Deaths.	Fourth Quarter. Number of Deaths.	Total.
1894	125	128	109	142	504
1895	160	166	111	163	600
1896	162	120	103	197	582
1897	180	143	89	133	545
1898	119	129	121	117	486
1899	149	119	119	190	577
1900	211	161	106	99	577
1901	143	112	106	124	485
1902	141	119	81	121	462
1903	117	122	103	122	464
Average of the yrs. 1894-1903	151	132	105	142	529
1904	140	114	70	131	455

I now locate the Deaths of residents in each Ward, and compare them with the registered Deaths in the same Ward for each of the last ten years, and with the average number registered in each Ward during the decade 1894-1903.

TABLE E

Wards.	1894 No. of D'ths	1895 No. of D'ths	1896 No. of D'ths	1897 No. of D'ths	1898 No. of D'ths	1899 No. of D'ths	1900 No. of D'ths	1901 No. of D'ths	1902 No. of D'ths	1903 No. of D'ths	Av'ge of ten years, 1894 to 1903	1904 No. of D'ths
North ..	102	127	89	94	90	102	90	93	83	77	95	71
South ..	96	137	148	113	108	120	140	93	116	88	116	93
East ..	126	136	134	161	113	148	162	109	116	141	135	142
West ..	134	159	183	143	136	163	125	147	101	131	142	112
Workhouse	46	41	28	34	39	44	60	43	53	31	42	40
Totals ..	504	600	582	545	486	577	577	485	469	468	529	458

Compared with 1903 returns, North Ward, and more especially West Ward, yielded fewer Deaths in 1904; East Ward had nearly the same mortality in 1904 as in 1903, whilst a slightly higher Death-rate obtained in South Ward, and a decidedly larger number of Deaths occurred in the Workhouse. In only one of the Wards was the mortality higher in 1904 than the average for the last ten years, viz., East Ward. The Deaths in the Workhouse were slightly below the average, whilst the Deaths in the other Wards in 1904 were very markedly below the average obtaining in the last decade.

The number of Deaths in Infants under one year of age was higher in 1904 than in 1903, but below the average of the preceding decade; that of children between one and five years of age, much lower in 1904 than in 1903, and than the average.

The mortality of children between five and fifteen years of age, and of young persons between fifteen and twenty-five, was markedly less in 1904 than in 1903, and than the average of the preceding ten years; whilst the Deaths between twenty-five and sixty-five were more numerous in 1904 than in 1903, and also the Deaths at the age of 65 and upwards showed an increase during last year. However, the Deaths of adults over twenty-five were considerably less in 1904 than the average obtaining in the previous decade.

TABLE F.

Years.	Number of Deaths at subjoined ages in each year.				Total.
	Under 1 Year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 25.	25 and upwards.	
1894	119	86	48	251	504
1895	174	99	46	281	600
1896	180	93	57	252	582
1897	169	75	46	255	545
1898	131	44	40	271	486
1899	181	87	40	269	577
1900	162	67	62	286	577
1901	138	49	37	261	485
1902	123	59	33	254	469
1903	121	69	58	220	468
Av'ge, 10 yrs. 1894 to 1903	150	73	45	260	529
1904	133	45	31	249	458

The Infantile Mortality—that is, the ratio between Deaths under one year of age and Births registered in the Borough—was larger in 1904 than in 1903, viz., one hundred and seventy (170) per thousand, as compared with one hundred and forty-seven (147) in 1903. This increased mortality is disappointing, but, I am glad to say, that it is below the average for the last ten years, viz., one hundred and eighty-seven (187) per thousand of Births registered. It is, however, higher than the Infantile Mortality throughout England and Wales, viz., one hundred and forty-six (146) per thousand: and in this direction our Vital statistics are not so satisfactory as might be desired.

In the next Table the Deaths of Residents are arranged under their respective Causes and in each Ward, and the Totals due to each Cause are compared with the Total numbers of Deaths registered from various Causes in each of the preceding ten years, and with the average number of Deaths due to the respective causes.

TABLE G.

Mortality from subjoined Causes.

SUB-DIVISIONS.										Totals.			
										All other Diseases.			
										Injuries.			
North Ward	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	43	71	93
South Ward	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	55	78	142
East Ward	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	4	112
West Ward	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	67	18	40
Workhouse	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	18	40
Total Deaths in 1903	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15	261	458	458
Average of 10 years, 1894-1903	.4	4.8	7.6	8.4	·1	1.7	·6	12.6	11.6	2.6	29.6	99.2	529.3
Total Deaths in 1903	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	14	6	35
Total Deaths in 1902	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13	1	10	28
Total Deaths in 1901	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	1	19	35
Total Deaths in 1900	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	30	4	26
Total Deaths in 1899	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	4	5	42
Total Deaths in 1898	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	50	125
Total Deaths in 1897	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	1	42
Total Deaths in 1896	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
Total Deaths in 1895	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	33
Total Deaths in 1894	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	36

The most noticeable features about this Table are the decrease in the number of Deaths in 1904, as compared with 1903, due to Whooping Cough and Phthisis; whilst Causes, not otherwise specified, yielded a larger number of Deaths in 1904 than in the preceding year.

Compared with the average of the ten preceding years, 1904 gave, under almost every Cause, a fewer number of Deaths, but the most marked decrease was in Deaths due to Diphtheria and Membranous Croup, Typhoid Fever, Measles, Whooping Cough, Diarrhoea, Phthisis, Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Influenza.

The group of Heart Diseases was the only one that yielded, in 1904, a decidedly higher number of Deaths than the average of the last ten years.

The Zymotic Death-rate for 1904 was the lowest that I have had to record, viz., .98 per thousand, as compared with a rate of 1.39 per thousand in 1903, and 1.42 in 1902. The Zymotic Death-rate throughout England and Wales, in 1904, was 1.94 per thousand, nearly twice as high as the rate in your Borough.

Two hundred and ten (210) cases of Infectious Diseases were notified to me in 1904, as compared with two hundred and eighty-four (284) in 1903, and two hundred and twenty-three (223) in 1902, as you will see from Table H, in which the notified cases of 1904 are allotted to the several wards in which they occurred, and the total number of cases of each disease occurring in 1904 are compared with similar totals in the four preceding years. One hundred and seventy-nine (179) cases of Scarlet Fever were reported, four (4) of Diphtheria, one (1) of Membranous Croup, fifteen (15) of Erysipelas, nine (9) of Typhoid Fever, and two (2) of Puerperal Fever.

TABLE H.

WARDS.	Smallpox.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria	Membranous Croup.	Typhoid and other continued Fevers.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.	TOTALS.	
								1900	1901
North ...	... 6	1 ...	23	47	46	13	5	1	1
South ...	... 8	2 ...	30	40	39	24	5	1	1
East ...	... 9	19 ...	84	41	33	40	12	1	2
West ...	... 19	3 ...	42	86	38	13	20	1	2
Totals in 1904	... 179	...	179	...	...	4	...	1	1
Totals in 1903	... 42	...	214	...	...	1	...	13	...
Totals in 1902	... 25	...	156	...	...	6	...	20	...
Totals in 1901	... 90	...	90	...	...	19	...	4	...
Totals in 1900	... 42	...	42	...	...	7	...	2	...
						2	...	15	...
						2	...	12	...
						2	...	2	...
						2	...	16	...
						2	...	2	...
						2	...	13	...
						33	...	13	...
							...	...	97

I am glad to say that no case of Smallpox has occurred in your Borough in 1904, whereas in 1903 I had to report to you forty-two (42) cases. From time to time I have received from neighbouring Medical Officers of Health reports of Smallpox cases having been in contact with Chorley residents. Your officers have kept the "Contacts" under observation, but no case of Smallpox has resulted. It is satisfactory to note that, owing to the provision of beds at Finnington Hospital by the Chorley Joint Hospital Board, your officers are ready for the immediate isolation of any case reported to them.

Scarlet Fever has again been very prevalent in the Borough, and one hundred and seventy-nine (179) cases have been reported to me. This disease was notified during every month of the year, and the number of cases varied from twenty-two (22) in March to six (6) in September. It was generally of a mild type, and only five (5) Deaths resulted. All the cases except seventeen (17) were removed to the Isolation Hospital. Of these one hundred and sixty-two (162) cases, four (4) died, yielding a Death-rate of 2·4 of the cases in Hospital. Seventeen (17) were retained at home, and one (1) died, giving a rate of 5·8.

Under the direction of your Inspector, all infected houses were fumigated and disinfected immediately after the removal of the patient to Hospital, or after convalescence of those retained at home, and all infected clothing, as far as could be ascertained, was conveyed to the Town's Yard and passed through the Disinfector.

I am still of opinion that, in some cases, the more valuable articles of clothing are wilfully concealed by some of the householders, and that re-infection occurs in those houses when the articles are again brought into use. On more than one occasion after an interval of some weeks, and whilst the patient was still in Hospital, a second case has been notified to me from the same house, though every endeavour had been used to thoroughly disinfect the house and clothing. I regret to say that, in some other cases—though I have exercised every care in ascertaining the freedom from infection of a patient before he is discharged from the Hospital, and the patient has been thoroughly disinfected—the Fever has again broken out in the house to which the case has returned. I am glad to say, however, that these cases are not so often occurring as they were.

Five (5) cases of Diphtheria and Membranous Croup were reported, and three (3) died.

Typhoid Fever is still on the decrease, only nine (9) cases having been reported during the year, as compared with thirteen (13) in 1903, twenty (20) in 1902, thirty-eight (38) in 1901, thirty-three (33) in 1900, and fifty-eight (58) in 1899. As I said in my report for 1903, I consider this decrease largely due to your action in converting the pail into the water-closet system, and to the systematic cleaning of the closets and attention to the drains. Only one (1) case of Typhoid Fever died, yielding a satisfactory Death-rate of only 11 per cent. of the reported cases. Four (4) of the cases were removed to Hospital, and all of them recovered.

Measles was prevalent during some parts of the year, and eight (8) Deaths were registered from that disease.

Whooping Cough yielded five (5) Deaths, but as neither it nor Measles is a notifiable disease, I have no means of ascertaining accurately the prevalence of these diseases.

All houses infected with Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, Typhoid Fever, &c., have been fumigated by your officials, and four thousand and forty-one (4,041) articles of infected clothing, bedding, &c., have been disinfected at your Steam Disinfector during the year.

The house accommodation in Chorley is, I consider, very good for a manufacturing town. There are very few back-to-back houses, or those in which overcrowding exists, one case only having been discovered during the year, and the streets are generally wide and open, and the houses well drained and provided with proper sanitary accommodation.

The main drainage of the town is good, and the system of sewage disposal and treatment at the Sewage Works is excellent. A great improvement has been made during the last few years by the gradual adoption of the water carriage system replacing the old pail system.

The Water supply to the town is also good, being provided by the Liverpool Corporation, and the water being filtered before entering the mains.

The Dacca Twist Company have completed the alterations to obviate the smell arising from their works. I am glad to be able to report that, as a rule, the nuisance is not now nearly so bad, and the smell not so frequent as formerly. On some occasions, however, there has been a decided recurrence of the nuisance, and I recommend that these Works still be kept under your observation, so that there be no irregularity or laxness in using the means already provided, or, if necessary, making further provision to obviate the nuisance.

The Refuse Destructor is now completed sufficiently to allow of its being used for the burning up of the town's refuse. Experimental trials have been made, and nearly ten tons of refuse, on the average of eight days' experiments, have been burnt in the Destructor per diem. I hope that in my next Report I shall be able to state that all tips have been discontinued, and that the whole of the refuse and garbage is being thoroughly consumed by the Destructor, the only satisfactory means of dealing with such materials.

You have ordered a Bath, &c., to be placed at the Destructor Works, for the benefit of the persons engaged there, and I am sure this provision for their comfort will be much appreciated.

You have ordered wire buckets to be placed in convenient places for the reception of waste paper, and have also ordered placards to be issued cautioning people against the dangerous practice of throwing orange peel and banana skins in the street and on the footpath.

Common Bank Sewage Works have been again improved during the year, and continue to give satisfaction. The average amount of sewage treated at these works amounted to 1,175,411 gallons per diem.

The Sewering of Cowling District (Cowling Brow, Crosse Hall Street, Cowling Road, &c.) is now completed, and the purification works, precipitating tanks, filters, lagoons, &c., are nearly finished. I am very glad that this, the last portion, of our Borough to be properly drained will soon be in a satisfactory condition.

Sewering has also been carried out in Stump Lane and Nichol Street, and several streets have been paved, flagged, &c., viz., Lawson Street, Stump Lane, Gordon Street, and Primrose Street.

Another great improvement effected during the year has been the erection of a new steel girder Bridge over the canal at Cowling, and the widening of the road approaching the bridge.

The Borough Surveyor has, at intervals, flushed the whole of the sewers in the Borough, and 13,473 yards and slop-stone drains have been flushed; 6,377 water closets and 1,478 waste water closets cleansed and flushed.

The Slaughter-house Returns show that eighteen (18) carcases out of sixty (60) inspected by me have been condemned as unfit for food, viz., five (5) Cattle, ten (10) Pigs, and three (3) Sheep. The weight of the meat so condemned amounted to two thousand six hundred and ten pounds (2,610); and, in addition, I have ordered the offals, including lungs, skirts, stomach, and bowels, of thirty-seven (37) other carcases to be destroyed.

At the Council meeting in June you made regulations for controlling the movement of Swine under the Swine Fever Order 1894, owing to an outbreak of Swine Fever near Blackburn, the Pigs having been purchased in Chorley.

Ten (10) cases of chimney-firing have been reported to you, and you have issued summonses against the householders, with the result that six (6) were fined sixpence and four shillings and sixpence costs, and four (4) one shilling and full costs.

The question of emitting black smoke from factory chimneys has occupied your attention during the year. Your inspector was directed to make observations, and reported to you in thirty-four (34) instances. By a resolution of the Council, the Inspector has been ordered to take proceedings in all cases where black smoke is allowed to issue from a chimney for a longer period in any hour than ten minutes. This restriction is calculated to increase the comfort and health in a manufacturing town, and, with the generous allowance of time, will not militate against the interests of the factory owners.

The Factories and Workshops have been visited in part during the year, and generally the inspection has been satisfactory.

CLEANLINESS.—Generally, the Factories and Workshops were found to be in a tolerably cleanly condition, but in one case a notice was served to whitewash.

VENTILATION AND OVERCROWDING.—No complaints have been made about the ventilation or overcrowding of workshops during the year. The Workshops have been measured and cards supplied, stating the number of people allowed in each room.

DRAINAGE generally is very good, but in one case notice was served to remedy imperfect drainage.

SANITARY ACCOMMODATION.—Generally Satisfactory. One hundred and thirty-two (132) Workshops and thirty-six (36) Bakehouses have been put on the register. No underground bakehouses exist in the town.

Almost if not all the workpeople carry on their occupation at the various Factories and Workshops, and I have not received the names of any Outworkers.

The County Police have taken fifty-four (54) samples of Food under the "Food and Drugs Act," and submitted them to the County Analyst for analysis. One prosecution only has resulted (for adulterated milk), but the case was dismissed by the magistrates. The samples taken were milk, sixteen (16); Lard, ten (10); Butter, eleven (11); Whiskey, three (3); Gin, one (1); Pepper, six (6); Vinegar, four (4); Jam, one (1); and Ginger, two (2).

In the concluding Table (Table I) I give a list of the various Nuisances abated, Sanitary defects remedied, and Houses, &c., disinfected during the year, showing that the work of the Inspector of Nuisances and his subordinates has been carried on as usual, actively and efficiently.

TABLE I.

Nuisances Abated and Sanitary Alterations made.	Totals.
Defective Drainage of Houses remedied	9
Slopstones disconnected from Sewers	1
Stoppages of Water Closets removed	388
Stoppage of Slopstones and Yard Drains remedied	191
Defective Water Closets remedied	45
Dirty Houses Whitewashed, &c.	23
Dirty Yards and Passages cleaned	58
Yards and Passages ordered to be flagged	35
Defective Manure Receptacles, &c., altered	7
Stables, Shippings, &c., defective as to Drainage, Ventilation, &c., remedied	9
Pigs, Poultry, and Pigeons kept so as to be a nuisance, removed	18
Houses infected with Fever, etc., fumigated	244
Defective Slopstones' Pipes and Down Spouts remedied ..	58
Overcrowding	1
Other Nuisances abated	35
Total	1072

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

JAMES A. HARRIS, M.D. (LOND.).

